A Bad Robot

By ReadWorks

Bonnie Graham just had to admit it: EARL was a bad robot. No longer could she overlook his many faults. He played music that was just embarrassingly bad. He seemed incapable of cool robot things like dancing the robot or cutting steel with his laser eyes. At night his pistons and spinning gears made so much noise that Bonnie could hardly sleep, even when she got really mad and squeezed him into the closet.

And then yesterday happened. Bonnie had spent months building her robot. She called it Electronic Armed Robotic Laserdeath (EARL), a name she chose last year when her mother seemed totally cool with the whole laser-eyed-robot-living-in-our-house idea. Bonnie later discovered her mother was joking; the project's first setback.

From there, Bonnie did all the engineering herself. She designed EARL's remote stabilization system, using an air-filled bladder in the machine's belly to keep its torso upright. She machined the hands from steel bearings coated in vulcanized rubber. Bonnie used lathes at her mom's tool-and-die company to sculpt EARL's face, with slanting eyes and a mouth full of jagged metal teeth, which made him look terrifying and awesome.

For 10 months, building EARL consumed all Bonnie's free time. Her friends at Garrett Morgan High School made a website called *WheresBonnie.com*, where they posted pictures of Bonnie's face crudely superimposed onto people climbing the Himalaya Mountains, or shopping in Tokyo.

Ok, seriously I don't remember the last time I saw you after school, Nicole Akmal, one of Bonnie's closest friends, wrote in an email. *Maybe this "robot" is actually that new boy Chas Phelps? Call me, nerdbreath.*

So yesterday Bonnie brought EARL to school. She knew he wasn't quite ready—his software still had bugs, and sometimes his right leg seized. But she couldn't handle her friends' needling any longer, or the weird looks from kids she didn't know.

And man, EARL made one sweet entrance. Trotting up the stairs beside Bonnie, the robot reflected sunlight like a mirror. Everyone fell silent as the two of them passed, and no one heard EARL's loud buzzing motorized arms and legs over the idling buses.

The euphoria didn't last long. Once inside, EARL noticed all the metal lockers, the tops of which have metal slats reminiscent of the robot's face. EARL slipped his rubber hand free of Bonnie's to inspect the lockers, shoving students aside in the process.

"EARL. Cancel Directive!" Bonnie said.

EARL heard nothing over the din of shrieking students running away in fear. Finally, the robot found a bashed-in locker door, probably the work of roughhousing football players. More than the other lockers, this one's bent metal door resembled EARL.

The robot grabbed it in both hands and ripped it off its hinges.

Bonnie was struck with horror. He's destroying the school! He's going to get me expelled! "EARL! CANCEL DIRECTIVE!!" she screamed.

EARL froze. The robot's head spun toward Bonnie as he clutched the locker door closer to his anodized steel chest.

"Looks like your stupid robot found a friend," said Brian Cotterman, a classmate who always teased Bonnie about her braces.

"Shut up, weasel," Bonnie shot back. But she was shaking. EARL's arms could generate 1,200 pounds of pressure per square-inch, enough to crush bowling balls. But how could its 2.1-gigahertz microprocessor brain, torn right from her dad's old laptop, possibly malfunction like this?

"EARL. Drop," Bonnie said. The robot walked to her side, but it did not drop the locker door. Bonnie sighed. Reprogramming the robot and reducing its arm strength meant weeks of work, but this was not the time.

"We're late for homeroom," said Bonnie, surprised to hear herself say "we." EARL is a tool, Bonnie's mother kept reminding her, not a friend or a puppy.

"Don't anthropomorphize it, honey," Bonnie's mom said one night after she found Bonnie dancing around her bedroom with the metal contraption. "It's a walking blender. Never forget that."

Right, Bonnie thought, standing in the school hallway. Walking blender. With a shaky hand, she took EARL by the elbow and guided him—it!—into homeroom.

"Why hello, Bonnie!" said Mrs. Grube, the homeroom teacher for Bonnie's freshman class. From her open expression, it didn't seem the teacher had heard the commotion down the hall. "I see you've brought your experiment. What is that he's carrying?"

A wave of suppressed giggles swept across the classroom.

"Um, it's a programming error," Bonnie said. "I can fix it."

"Hmm," Mrs. Grube said, pausing for a few uncomfortable seconds, her eyebrows knotted as she figured what to do next.

"Well," said the teacher, her mood brightening, "We've all heard a lot about your robot. Why don't you tell us about him?"

Bonnie exhaled. "Great!" she said. "EARL. Initiate Demonstration Program 1."

The robot turned and faced the class. The students' backs stiffened. Only now did they see the thing's true height. Demonstration Program 1 called for EARL, using his right index finger, to press "Play" on the iPod embedded in his chest. The song "Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger" by Daft Punk would flow from speakers in his hips, and EARL would dance, making karate-chops with his hands as the wheels in his feet executed perfect moonwalks.

Unfortunately there was a locker door in EARL's right hand, and he refused to let go.

So the robot defaulted to Demonstration Program 2, tapping the iPod with his left index finger. Bonnie watched in horror as her robot waltzed to Celine Dion's "My Heart Will Go On." She had forgotten all about Demonstration Program 2. It was written months ago, back when she doubted EARL could handle pop-and-lock dance moves.

Tears filled Bonnie's eyes. She didn't even *like* Celine Dion anymore!

"EARL! Cancel Directive!" Bonnie shouted.

The robot heard nothing over the lyrics. "Near, far, where-EVER you are!" The terrible screeching caterwauled through EARL's thigh speakers. "I believe that the heart does go on!"

Mrs. Grube's eyes stood as wide open as her mouth. Bonnie's classmates pushed back in their chairs, unsure whether to laugh or run for cover.

I cannot stand one more second of this, Bonnie thought. As EARL pivoted left in his waltz, she moved in behind him, reached into the seams in the robot's lower back, and disconnected the red and black clamps holding power lines to EARL's battery pack. As the big machine slumped to the ground, its collapsing torso squeezed air from the inflated bladder, making a noise like a balloon rapidly losing air.

The classroom lost it. Weasel Brian Cotterman and his four stupid friends laughed so hard they fell off their seats and rolled across the floor. Bonnie felt like she might explode. Tears pouring, she bolted out of the classroom.

That night Bonnie got her first good night's sleep in weeks. She was worn out from all the crying. Plus her dad moved his car from the garage and put EARL in there instead, so finally Bonnie couldn't hear the machine's clicks and whirs. When she finally woke up, she walked out to the garage and found EARL. He slouched in the far corner, one arm draped over her mother's drill press, the other wrapped tight around the school locker door.

Bonnie smiled. The robot had found some friends, and now it was time for Bonnie to find hers. She took her phone from the pocket of her shorts and called Nikki Akmal.

"Hey dorknugget," Bonnie said. "What are you doing later?"

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Who is EARL?

A EARL is Bonnie's robotics teacher.
B EARL is Bonnie's father.
C EARL is the robot Bonnie built.
D EARL is Bonnie's best friend at school.

2. The main event in the story is when Bonnie brought EARL to school. What happens when Bonnie brought EARL to school?

A Bonnie ran away when EARL ripped one of the lockers from its hinges.
B Bonnie lost control of EARL when EARL began to malfunction.
C EARL followed Bonnie's directions and entertained her classmates.
D Bonnie's classmates attacked EARL.

3. EARL's software still had bugs and needed to be reprogrammed even though Bonnie worked very hard on building EARL. What evidence from the text supports this conclusion?

A EARL tore off a locker door and did not listen to Bonnie's instructions.
B Bonnie had to work on the robot for a long time.
C Bonnie's friends were frustrated that they had not hung out with her in so long.
D EARL had slanting eyes and a mouthful of jagged teeth.

4. Read the following sentences from the text: "Bonnie felt like she might explode. Tears pouring, she bolted out of the classroom." Based on the evidence in these sentences, how was Bonnie feeling?

A Bonnie was happy and proud.
B Bonnie was tired yet excited.
C Bonnie was nervous and apprehensive.
D Bonnie was frustrated and upset.

5. What is the theme of this story?

A Robots are unreliable instruments that humans should not waste time building.
B To succeed at something you must ignore your friends and other parts of your personal life.
C Even when you work very hard, things don't always work out as you hoped.
D If you work hard at something, nothing will go wrong.

6. Read the following sentences: "EARL is a tool, Bonnie's mother kept reminding her, not a friend or a puppy. 'Don't **anthropomorphize** it, honey,' Bonnie's mom said one night after she found Bonnie dancing around her bedroom with the metal contraption. 'It's a walking blender. Never forget that.'"

As used in the passage, what does the word "**anthropomorphize**" mean?

A to program a robot so that it acts in a robotic or unnatural way
B to give human characteristics to an object or animal
C to make a human act more like an animal and less of a human
D to program a robot so that it acts more like an animal

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

EARL demonstrated many problems in his programming, _____, tearing a locker door off and acting as if it were a friend.

A for example
B however
C instead
D before

8. Bonnie's friends miss her because she spends so much time working on her robot. What evidence from the text supports this conclusion?

9. Bonnie spent months working hard to build and program EARL. How did Bonnie feel when she couldn't control EARL during his visit to her school? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

10. Why does Bonnie decide to call her friends the morning after her disaster with EARL at school? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Name: _____ Date: _____

NTI - 6TH GRADE MATH - DAY #9

Question 1 of 10

Which equation is equivalent to $5(3x + 2) = 40$?

- A. $15x + 2 = 40$
- B. $15x + 10 = 40$
- C. $15x + 2 = 200$
- D. $15x + 10 = 200$

Question 2 of 10

Which choice below is the same as 25 less than 7 times a number?

- A. 7y - 25
- B. 7y + 25
- C. 25 - 7y
- D. 25 + 7

Question 3 of 10

Solve the inequality.

$x - 4 > 17$

- A. $x > 13$
- B. $x < 13$
- C. $x < 21$
- D. $x > 21$

Question 4 of 10

Solve the inequality.

$17v - 4 < 30$

- A. $v < 34$
- B. $v < 13$
- C. $v < 2$
- D. $v > 2$

Question 5 of 10

Carlos runs 6 laps around the track on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. On Friday he runs 8 laps. Which expression shows how many laps Carlos ran in 5 days?

- A. $(6 + 4) \times 8$
- B. $(6 \times 8) + 5$
- C. $(6 + 5) \times 8$
- D. $(6 \times 4) + 8$

Question 6 of 10

Mary is solving the following problem. She begins by using the distributive property. What will the problem look like after the distributive property has been applied?

$3(4a + 5) = 12$

- A. $7a + 5 = 12$
- B. $12a + 5 = 12$
- C. $12a + 15 = 12$
- D. $12a + 15 = 36$

Question 7 of 10

Which equation is equivalent to $0.35(0.5x - 20) = 28$?

- A. $0.175x - 20 = 28$
- B. $0.175x - 10 = 28$
- C. $0.175x - 7 = 28$
- D. $0.175x - 7 = 9.8$

Question 8 of 10

Jessica has $200.00 in the bank. She withdraws n dollars. She now has $153.00.

Which equation would you use to solve this problem?

- A. $\$153 - n = \$200.00$
- B. $\$200.00 - n = 153.00$
- C. $\$200.00 + \$153.00 = n$
- D. $\$200.00 + n = \$153.00$

Question 9 of 10

Jonathan saved $32.00 to purchase tickets for rides at the carnival.

If each ticket cost $1.50, which equation shows how many tickets Jonathan can purchase?

- A. $32.00t = 1.50$
- B. $t + 1.50 = 32.00$
- C. $t \times 15 = 32$
- D. $1.50t = 32.00$

Question 10 of 10

Fencing costs $12 a foot.

Which of these equations represents how to find the cost (C) of N feet of fence?

- A. $C = 12 \times N$
- B. $C = 12 + N(C)$
- C. $N = 12 \times C$
- D. $N = 12 + P$